

Being a Sensible Woman : Hypertextuality in Grimm's Fairy Tale and Juliet Marillier's *Wildwood Dancing*

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Abstract

The re-writing of a fairy tale caters for characters, settings and values that have undergone changes, be it explicit or implicit. In Juliet Marillier's *Wildwood Dancing*, the main female character Jena is transformed from the passive and obedient Twelfth/Youngest Princess of Grimm's *The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes* into a brave and sensible figure. She challenges the oppression of patriarchal rules by taking control of her household in her father's absence, securing her four sisters' welfare, and keeping secret of their nocturnal dancing trips in the Other Kingdom despite being threatened by her domineering male cousin. In this way, Gerard Genette's Hypertextuality strives to investigate the underlying patterns manifested in both literary works by applying the Re-vision element. Through it, Jena's and the Twelfth/Youngest Princess' sensibility trait and the socio-cultural settings surrounding them are highlighted in order to determine the importance of the overall hypertextuality process that takes place between the two. Later, Jena emerges as the more influential heroine than her predecessor character because she does not stop struggling to be regarded as an independent young woman who can always give advice and make decisions for her family affairs sensibly. Also, it is eventually proven that sensibility is indeed a strong weapon to be possessed by women in order to empower themselves against the conventions of a patriarchal world.

Keywords: Fairy tale, hypertextuality, Women, Re-vision, Sensibility

Abstrak

Penulisan ulang dari sebuah dongeng seringkali mengikutsertakan berbagai macam perubahan yang terjadi pada tokoh-tokoh, latar, dan nilai-nilai yang terkandung di dalamnya, baik secara tersurat maupun tersirat. Dalam novel *Wildwood Dancing* karya Juliet Marillier, tokoh utamanya yang bernama Jena mengalami transformasi, yakni dari seorang tokoh Putri Keduabelas/Bungsu yang pasif dan penurut dari dongeng *The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes* yang ditulis Grimm bersaudara menjadi seorang gadis yang pemberani dan bijaksana dalam novel tersebut. Ia menentang penindasan dari nilai-nilai patriarkal yang mengungkungnya dengan mengambil alih urusan rumah tangga keluarganya ketika sang ayah pergi, menjamin kesejahteraan keempat saudaranya, dan berhasil menjaga kunjungan rahasia mereka ke Other Kingdom walau terus diancam oleh sepupu laki-laki mereka. Studi ini menggunakan elemen Re-*visi* dari teori Hipertekstualitas yang dicanangkan Gerard Genette guna menelaah pola-pola dasar yang terdapat dalam kedua karya tersebut. Dengan cara itulah, sifat bijaksana yang dimiliki tokoh Jena dan tokoh Putri Keduabelas/Bungsu beserta latar sosio-kultural yang melingkupi keduanya dapat diungkap untuk menentukan pentingnya keseluruhan proses hipertekstual yang telah terjadi pada kedua kisah tersebut. Nantinya, Jena terbukti sebagai lakon yang lebih memiliki pengaruh daripada tokoh pendahulunya karena ia tidak berhenti berjuang sebagai seorang wanita muda yang mandiri, dan ia mampu menjadi sosok yang senantiasa diandalkan oleh keluarganya di saat-saat genting. Selain itu, terbukti pula bahwa sifat bijaksana merupakan jaminan kekuatan bagi kaum perempuan untuk dapat membantu mereka dalam berjuang melawan kekangan-kekangan dari sistem patriarki.

Kata Kunci : Dongeng, hipertekstualitas, kebijaksanaan, perempuan, re-*visi*

Introduction

First and foremost, belonging to the category of folktales, fairy tales are constantly re-born and reproduced into myriad newer versions with modifications that befit the creators' imaginations. Hitherto we have come to consume popular novels, songs, plays, film adaptations, and more which were derived from the pre-existing fairy tales written decades ago. In *The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes* by the Grimm Brothers, the twelve princesses live with their father in a sumptuous castle but are never permitted to take a stroll outside let alone attending evening balls like many young women do at that era. Strangely, the king discovers that his daughters' shoes are torn each morning as if they have been dancing all night. Curious that the princesses might trick him, he later calls for any man to sleep in their chamber and follow them on their secret journey. However, the princesses manage to drug each of them until the last one, a poor soldier is finally able to reveal the mystery. Similar to it, Marillier's *Wildwood Dancing* presents five sisters who must cope on their own in their father's absence against harsh winter, financial difficulties and constant threats from the Night People of the forest. Here, the girls must also safeguard their land and property from the seizing hands of their cousin Cezar, who seems very eager to take control over everything, even going as far as wanting to end their secret occasional trip to the Other Kingdom to dance. The novel has been awarded several times, namely as the Winner of the Aurealis Award for Best Fantasy Novel in 2006,

Winner of the Beehive Book Award for Young Adult Fiction, a YALSA Best Book for Young Adults in 2007, a US Board of Books for Young People and Children Book's Council Outstanding International Book in 2008.

In *The Postmodern Fairy tale* (2007), Kevin Paul Smith states that in recent contemporary works of fiction, fairy tales are no longer the side story or element that underlies their structure but have become the core focus of the whole narrative itself. This only means that there is a strong tendency of the current trend in authors and filmmakers to directly use the original fairy tales as their main works, only to be supported with elongated details or slight variations. The products born from these artists dismiss forms of narratives that resemble the original version and instead directly incorporate the fairy tales into their work. Therefore, it is understandable that more and more academic scholars are drawn to investigate the link between the original tales and its rewritten versions using the intertextuality approach.

The Grimm Brothers, Jacob Ludwig Grimm (1785-1863) and Wilhelm Carl Grimm (1785-1859), were studying at Lyzeum in Kassel when they first encountered Professor Friederich Karl von Savigny who encouraged them to take a deeper study in the roots of historical contexts that serve as the basis for law establishment (Zipes, 2007, p. 12). From there, they finally traveled from place to place to gather many local tales, which they were published in 1812 into two compiled editions titled *Kinder-und Häusmärchen*, which was later translated in English as *Nursery and Household Tales*. The second volume of the compi-

lation consists of one story called *The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes*, bearing the story of twelve princesses who are the secret visitors of an underground kingdom. In the modern era, the tale is more popularly called *The Twelve Dancing Princesses*. It has been adapted into some storybooks, children animated-movies, and plays, but has never received the equal popularity that has been given to *Cinderella*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Hansel & Gretel* or *Rapunzel*. Later, the tale is reproduced by an Australian award-winning author named Juliet Marillier, who transformed the twelve princesses into five commoner sisters living in a ruined castle. Marillier repeatedly claims that her novel incorporates the Grimm's tale (Marillier, Take Five Interview: Juliet Marillier and *Wildwood Dancing*, 2008).

This study establishes its roots in tracing how an original fairy tale affected the work of a young adult novel published decades later. It is conducted between one of the Grimm Brothers' collected fairy tales, *The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes*, and Juliet Marillier's *Wildwood Dancing*, a novel which was inspired by the former tale. The main focus of the discussion is placed under two found aspects respectively, namely the portrayal of sensibility and the socio-cultural setting that contextualizes the background of both literary works. In the sense that fairy tales and its adaptations contain numerous deep details which can hardly be overlooked only from the surface, Gerard Genette's Hypertextuality discipline is selected to identify and interpret the connection that is oriented between the two literary works, paying focus on the re-vision ele-

ment attaining the nature of sensibility and the socio-cultural setting. Here, sensibility is defined as "synonymous with great feeling, refinement, and femininity, but was still assumed to coexist with rational thought in a single mind" (Dolan, 2003, p. 240). As the main protagonist of *Wildwood Dancing*, Jena is the embodiment of the Twelfth Princess in *The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes*, and she is most notable for always being the sensible person in the family.

The practical use of the article is to discover what is the importance of sensibility to be possessed by women in the novel, and why the social and cultural surrounding on display is crucial to give impact to the characters' actions as well as decisions in overcoming obstacles. The findings of the article will be of interest to those who are devoted to fairy tale intertextuality and hypertextuality, especially in analyzing Grimm's fairy tale compilations. Also, the result will serve as an additional discussion of numerous studies regarding women's values and principles in fairy tales.

Grimm's *The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes* has been used as a subject in the area of feminist affective narratology in which another novel version of the tale, Jeanette Winterson's *Story of the Twelve Dancing Princesses*, was placed under scrutiny because it criticises the unusual fates of the twelve royal sisters after their marriage, challenging the patent traditional gender role of women in fairy tales (Webb, 2011, p. 446). Instead of having the traditional 'happily ever after' ending with their prince spouses, some of the princesses kill and dispose of their husbands while some others prefer the same-sex romantic relationship. Moreover,

Webb also notices that as an author, Winterson creatively took various fairy tale as well as poem formulas from *The Frog Prince*, *Rapunzel*, and Robert Browning's *My Last Duchess* for each of the princess's narrative.

Going further in the fairy tale criticism, Maria Tatar (1987) reveals a rude awakening to the world when she traced back Grimm's *Nursery and Household Tales* only to find that it was actually full of gruesome facts that were hidden due to its publication for children. The fairy tales emanated from adult lives; therefore it is no surprise that many of the stories contain brutal issues such as sex, murder, mutilation, incest, cannibalism, and infanticide which were rarely shown publicly. Tatar warns readers to be careful when introducing the stories to their growing children. Another prolific fairy tale critic is Jack Zipes, whose three books discuss the importance of analyzing the root of fairy tales that can lead to the clarification of symbolic past traditions and rituals connected to the upper class's position in a certain period (2006; 2006; 2007). Zipes tries to link them with the ups and downs of Western civilization, also with the oral tradition of story retelling.

It has also come to the attention that, in Grimm's fairy tales, the female heroines lack the cooperative effort when facing challenges or dangers. Unlike the male heroes, most of the women characters are forced to perform difficult tasks alone in order to survive without receiving the help from other women to achieve the same goal (Mendelson, 1997, p. 118). Should their compromise exist, the female char-

acters' fates would be more empowered because they struggle together. Similar to the notion, the way Donna Jo reinvented the portrayals of male and female characters within the fairy tales' gender area is underlined (Crew, 2002, p. 79). Jo's idea is considered important by Hillary Crew for her feminist literary and genre research by using some world well-known fairy tales such as *Rapunzel*, *Rumpelstiltskin*, *Hansel & Gretel*, *Beauty & the Beast*, *The Frog Prince* and the like. Still mulling over feminist literary criticism, there are feminist values to be recognised inside the four versions of *Cinderella* which were specifically re-written for children, such as Jane Yolen's *Sleeping Ugly* and Marcia Liberman's *Some Day My Prince Will Come*, through displaying the pedagogic and aesthetic features inside the world of children's literature (Parsons, 2004, p. 140; Joosen, 2005, p. 131).

Two previous theses in intertextuality from Universitas Airlangga are also included in the resource. The first one is about the similarities and differences found between Homer's *Odyssey*, an ancient Greek narrative, and Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Sea of Monsters*, a contemporary novel which was inspired by the former text (Safitri, 2013, p. 10). The other one also digs into one of Homer's epic works, *Illiad*, and compares it with Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*. The main heroine of *Illiad*, Helen of Troy, serves as the inspiring figure for Anna Karenina herself, with which their downfall after having an affair brought down their entire families and honor upon receiving adversary remarks from their surrounding society (Imansari, 2015, p. 8).

Another previous study from Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta discusses the characterization and moral values found within the Germanic fairy tale of *Frau Holle* and Indonesian *Bawang Merah Bawang Putih*, going over the differences between the female key characters in both literary works along together with their traits and moral principles (Laily N, 2015, p. 6). It is later proven that both aspects highlighted are almost identical with each other. The last one is a post-graduate thesis from Universitas Gadjah Mada which enrolls in the intertextuality between Jasmine Jones' novel adapted from Disney's movie *Enchanted* and its fairy tale blueprints: *Snow White*, *Cinderella*, *Rapunzel*, *Sleeping Beauty in the Wood*, and the *Briar Rose*. The study performs McHale's postmodern fiction theory, resulting in the fact that *Enchanted* is created from ontological elements, and that the novel itself is a fairy-tale like one, with the re-enchantment idealism emerges because humans' deepest hopes for enchantment are crushed under the rational suppression of a highly ambitious world (Pujjati, 2009, p. 9).

While for the previous studies of hypertextuality itself, the only relevant study that has been found is Kevin Paul Smith's *The Postmodern Fairytale: Folkloric Intertexts in Contemporary Fiction* (2007) which talks about various forms of fairy tale intertexts using Gerard Genette's Hypertextuality theory. The book provides examples and many elements that can be applied directly to analyze fairy tales and their countless adaptations, be it in the form of films or published literary texts (Smith, 2007, p. 11). The elements

of Hypertextuality are explained in great detail with which those who are interested in identifying the genre will find the book most helpful. Most importantly, most of the previous studies highlighted above only discuss the overall characteristics of the tale's heroines or the ideology of the stories they inhabit. They rarely focus on one particular asset of a character's trait, which is sensibility nature and socio-cultural background underlying the narratives of Grimm's *The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes* and Juliet Marillier's *Wildwood Dancing* using the re-vision element in Hypertextuality.

The basic fundamental concept of intertextuality is that there is no original text, to begin with. Although very ancient texts such as fairy tales or religious artefacts are widely accepted as the 'first' texts that were produced, they might have been written after the writer had read or perceived an event which occurred outside him, in which he could draw inspirations or ideas to write (Worton, 1990, p. 20). Interestingly, this kind of interconnectedness is often found between two or more texts, regardless the portion of the similarity itself.

Initially derived from Julia Kristeva's Intertextuality, French theorist Gerard Genette suggested Transtextuality as the major terminology to cater for his five sub-theories, which are (1) 'Kristevan' Intertextuality, which is associated with the elements of allusion, quotation, and plagiarism, (2) Paratextuality that focuses on the link between a text's body with its titles, epigraphs, illustrations, additional information, former versions and more, (3) Metatextuality governing the *par excellence* which relates a text with its critical responses, (4) Architextuality that entwines a text

with its tacit or nominal genre, and last but not least, (5) Hypertextuality emphasizes the gap between a successor and its predecessor texts (Worton, 1990, pp. 22-23). Genette attempted to cover for all kinds of interrelation among texts by avoiding boundaries and possibilities in which they may take different forms. Indeed, this explains why he created five branch theories from one source only for that purpose.

Hypertextuality serves as an instrument that highlights the importance of reading and interpreting text A, which is called hypertext, and reproducing it into text B, which is known as hypertext (Genette, 1997, pp. 5 in Allen, 2000, pp. 107-108). The very concept marks his perception of literature in general that the existence of 'genuine' texts is actually false, for one cannot create a complete literary work without reading the work of others beforehand. Intertextuality's former features, **Hypogram** and **Transformation**, are replaced by **Hypotext** and **Hypertext**, but both still perform in the same function. Indeed, in this study, the hypotext is the older text, Grimm Brothers' *The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes* and the hypertext is the newer one, Juliet Marillier's *Wildwood Dancing*.

Since a text is a labyrinth of ideas, Kevin Paul Smith demonstrated deep interpretation through providing Hypertextuality with eight features or elements in order to incorporate the theory into both or more interlinking literary works. Those components are to be named as (1) Authorised, (2) Writerly, (3) Incorporation, (4) Allusion, (5) Re-vision, (6) Fabulation, (7) Metafictional, and (8) Architextual/

Chronotopic (Smith, 2007, p. 10). In this study, the element to be applied is Re-vision, since it regards the overall correlation between the hypotext and hypertext respectively. Re-vision overlooks texts implicitly and explicitly, identifying the wholeness of analyzed texts particularly for its structure and pattern. It examines how far an older text has been transformed and modified into a newer one. In this text, Re-vision will cater for both sensibility trait possessed by the main female protagonists and the narratives' pattern as well as the socio-cultural settings serving as the foundations.

The article is conducted through descriptive qualitative research for word quotations and descriptions as the data. It will give a word-discussion result in the importance of re-writing older narratives and later presenting them to modern-day generations. The direct-indirect quotations are taken from previous studies and expert book criticisms within the area of hypertextuality and fairy tale.

The in-depth interpretative description is produced through observing two kinds of sources, which are primary and secondary. The primary sources are Grimm's *The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes* that stands as the prior text and Marillier's *Wildwood Dancing* which functions as the late-coming text. The secondary sources are directed to scholarly criticisms like Maria Tatar and Jack Zipes' books to get a correct perspective to interpret fairy tales, while for Hypertextuality, Graham Allen's *Intertextuality* (2000) and Kevin Paul Smith's *The Postmodern Fairytale: Folkloric Intertexts in Contemporary Fiction* (2007) is regarded as the most appro-

priate sources to apply. Relevant journals are also discussed and pinpointed to strengthen the argument of the study.

Repeated close readings of the primary sources are conducted before analyzing. The foremost main intention is to classify and note both of the leading heroines respectively, the Twelfth/Youngest Princess of the Grimm's tale and Jena of Marillier's Novel. The two female characters are compared in which sensibility exists within their nature. Later, the entire pattern of both stories will be spotted and remarked along together with the socio-cultural aspects surrounding them. By demonstrating the Re-vision component from Hypertextuality upon them, the entire content of both targeted texts will display how far the inter-discipline effort has taken.

The selected data are administered, closely identified and deciphered to form the entwinement between the two texts. The gathered sources are also centralized to refer to the similar issues and themes, with the influence that can be related to the main points. Hence, the first step in analyzing is to describe the details of the two texts, then place the sensibility trait and the story pattern under the term of Re-vision, and last but not least, interpret as well as conclude the red thread found in both narratives as the final result. Re-vision is undertaken to evaluate the entire outlook phenomenon of the hypertextual study between Grimm's *The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes* and Marillier's *Wildwood Dancing*.

Discussion

The concept of fairy tale rewriting indeed draws some alterations that take place between the first text and the next. The values and features incorporated in the hypertext narrative or the later-text have certainly undergone a process of transformation to be fitted with myriad different milieus of many contemporary authors. Thus, revision in hypertextuality is "concerned with revising the hypotext with all that this implies in terms of structural similarities between the two tales" (Smith, 2007, p. 34). This type of element places the fifth position within the category of fairy tale identification, evaluating the way that how the overall invention of a late-coming text from an older one can be viewed both as differently improved and at the same time similarly constructed through its core framework.

As the dark draws nigh and the king locks the chamber door, the twelve princesses in Grimm's *The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes* prepare themselves to attend the ball in the secret underground kingdom. They are very much unaware that their father the king has put them under suspicion and been quite offended by not knowing what his girls' secret activity is. Fulfilling that purpose, the king holds up a quest for any eligible men who want to try their luck in revealing a mystery and be rewarded by marrying one of the princesses and inherit the kingdom. The first princess tries to protect their only revelry through drugging the princes with wine and denying any possibilities that might hinder their journey. Everyone is to believe that nothing will ever harm their secret, and the twelve royal ladies would surely continue

partying without anyone interfering. However, somebody else is able to see the flaws in the plan.

Elizabeth A. Dolan's (2003) study displays that a sensible figure is someone who is highly intuitive as well as perceptive, being particularly characterized with rational thinking, to the point of demonstrating strong righteous justice. On the account of that remark, the Twelfth Princess begins to be recognized because of her constant worried remarks upon the arrival of the poor soldier, who surprisingly still wants to enlist as a volunteer in the king's quest although so many have failed before. Contrary to her eldest sister's belief, the youngest princess feels a great unease when the soldier enters the scene. She repeatedly announces that something is unsettling, a strong hint that they would not be able to visit the underground kingdom anymore soon. But of course, opinions which do not include evidence are quick to be dismissed. The first completely princess rejects the idea and tries to reinforce the fact that they are indeed much smarter than the rest of the men who failed the king's quest. Thus, she completely disregards any sayings from her youngest sister regarding her 'bad feeling' about the journey they are about to take that very night. Based on her opinion, it is just a mere negative mood or over-thinking that can befall anyone every now and then.

"But the youngest said, "I don't know. You're all happy, yet I have a strange feeling. I'm sure that something bad is going to happen to us."

"You're a silly goose," said the oldest.

"You're always afraid. Have you forgotten how many princes have already tried in vain?" (Grimm, 2014, p. 433)

Provided by her response above, it is clear for the first princess that her youngest sister is only blabbing things which surely exist only in her childish imagination. She also calls her a troublesome worrywart who is highly talkative and helplessly whiny. While the first princess feels overconfident in her argument, it does not so with the Twelfth One. Instead of trying to reassure herself with her eldest sister's harsh criticisms, the Twelfth/Youngest Princess keeps on voicing her warnings out of pure instinct on upcoming obstacles. She cannot see the soldier who is following them with his invisibility cloak on, but surely the young princess feels his presence and hears him tripping, running, breaking branches and even stepping on her gown. Had their positions in the sisterhood altered, the Twelfth Princess' comments would have been heard by the rest of the other eleven sisters. Unfortunately, since she is just a last child of twelve, the little princess has neither power nor authority to do something about those bad omens. She has to be mute and obeys whatever her eldest sister commands her to do, regardless the consequences.

The similar case also happens to Jena, the second sister of five in Marillier's *Wildwood Dancing*. Always trusted as the brain driver behind her family's business, Jena has always been noted as the sensible sister in her family. Like the Youngest/Twelfth Princess, she has an elder sister named Tati who has more influence upon people's impression of them. However, it is Jena who

holds the power in their household arrangements. Before leaving, the girls' father entrusts almost everything in their family affairs to Jena, and she accepts them proudly without feeling burdened in the slightest, as she utters her reason, "I was good with figures and helped him regularly with such tasks" (Marillier, 2008, p. 2). She is much oriented toward keeping her sisters safe and providing the best solutions should troubles arise. Also, she is very much committed to keeping a low profile on their monthly trips to the Other Kingdom, the only place where they can truly relax and enjoy the company of otherworldly creatures of the forest. Jena serves as the most important figure in founding the entrance portal as well as engaging the Wildwood inhabitants to help protect the five sisters' well-being, especially after Tati falls in love with one of the Night People's members, who is suspected to be a blood-sucking vampire.

"Tati," I said, "there's something else we have to talk about."

"What, Jena?" Her voice suddenly cool. It was as if she had taken a deliberate step away.

"Sorrow. The Night People. I saw the two of you dancing. I saw the way you were looking at each other. You need to be careful—careful you don't forget the rules". I pulled the cover up to my chin; the chamber was freezing.

There was a silence; then came Tati's voice, not much more than a whisper: "Sometimes you're so sensible, you make me angry." (Marillier, 2008, pp. 104-105)

What is interesting to be inferred from the dialogue excerpt is that Tati, as the eldest sister, secretly harbors envy towards the second

sister Jena. Since Tati is only known as the beautiful one while Jena the sensible and the opinionated sister, she is never much appreciated for her thoughts and opinions. Unlike Jena, she is hardly considered intelligent at all. Although it is undoubted that nobody will have perfectly identical qualities, apparently Tati views Jena's to be far worthier and valuable than her own. Though she continues to act stubborn toward Jena, Tati actually feels inferior to her younger sister. But since she cannot completely crush Jena's warnings just like her predecessor The First Princess in Grimm's fairy tale, Tati strives to treat her sister coldly in order to lower her domination in the family. However, it is ironic that Jena's strong sensibility is the only thing that has protected her from the evil intentions of the Night People so far, with Jena always reminding her and trying to talk sense out of her. Also, with Jena's position as the second child and not as the last, she is much more empowered than the Twelfth/Youngest Princess in making her calculations, warnings, advice and predictions worthwhile.

As "the expression of sensibility forged a link between the practice of virtue, moral stature, and right feelings" (Sedgwick, 2000, p. 200), Jena always has to meet the expectations of her family to be in the front line in almost any matter that requires a decisive head. In fact, nobody else in the family can bear standing up against their bullying cousin Cezar, who wants to take control of their land and inherited rights exactly after their father's departure. Jena herself aspires to become an independent woman who can have a full control of her own life, properties, ambitions, and the

free rights to choose her suitor. Instead of both-ering herself with beautification or romantic dreams like the majority of women her age, Jena prefers the privilege of being the leader of the household and exploring her own strength as well as abilities.

However, she is still limited by a number of people who dislike a woman taking charges of her own affairs, including Cezar, the Night People, and even their own relative Aunt Bogdana. Fortunately, Jena continues to be bold in her arguments despite having to refine some of her principles and adapt them to the new world. In the end, she manages to overthrow the chal-lenges and those who hinder her by working hard to secure everything and deciding to trust her own sensible instincts and wise judgments. Contrary to the fate of the twelve princesses from Grimm Brothers' fairy tale, Jena, and her four sisters end their nocturnal dance journeys to the Other Kingdom on their own account to maintain its folk's safety and choose their own life partners by free will.

The Grimm Brothers' fairy tales are pretty much situated in vast parts of Germany, and it is only logical to think that *The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes* happened to be collected from the same country. The tale was speculated to hap-pen around the fifteenth century, and at that time young women were expected to wait pas-sively at home, act and dress femininely in order to attract eligible suitors. In this sense, the young twelve princesses from *The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes* are expected to fulfill that wish until it is time for the king to marry them off to

some wealthy princes. The same restraints also befall the five sisters of Marillier's *Wildwood Danc-ing*, which uses a Transylvanian countryside around the 14th century. But since their status be-ongs to the middle class, then the five sisters must cope with their daily household chores ra-ther than sitting around or playing dressing-up all day long.

Notwithstanding with the idea, both fe-male parties of the two tales refuse to obey the patriarchal conventions that bind them by attend-ing night revelries at some magical underground kingdom and keeping its existence a secret. In the tale, the king father is suspicious of their clandes-tine escapades because he always finds his daugh-ter's dancing shoes to be torn each morning:

“... and when he awoke the next morning, all twelve of them had been to a dance, for their shoes were standing there with holes in the soles. The same thing happened the second and third nights...” (Grimm, 2014, p. 432).

He is agitated that they might do some-thing inappropriate in his absence, although he has oppressed them every day by locking them together in one big bedchamber when the night falls. Still, one must wonder how the aristocratic girls found the portal that led them to a magical realm earlier and corroborate the story to keep their father's suspicion away, let alone tracking the princes who later come to try their luck at the quest:

“In the evening, at bedtime, he was led to the ante-chamber, and as he was preparing to go to bed the oldest daughter brought him a beaker of wine...” (Grimm, 2014, p. 432).

One can assume that the twelve princesses

try their best to protect the only thing that quenches their thirst for adventures and revelations by making up stories.

Susan Mosher Stuard (1976) in her book *Women in Medieval Society* suggests that women who managed to do well in the education field mostly ended up to be alienated, and there were far too few who bothered to investigate how they could achieve such accomplishments. This is clearly incorporated within the two targeted narratives. Instead of asking permission from his daughters to inspect the underground kingdom and deciding everything upon his own wise judgments, the king chooses to use a stranger to follow them for fearing the magical subjects that might harm him. The troublesome aspect here is the fact that after the princesses are caught red-handed by the soldier, the only freedom journey to the underground kingdom they have is forcefully confiscated and the eldest princess, who acts as the most rebellious, must pay the biggest price by losing her youth prime time by being married off to the soldier. The twelve princesses are not praised for being capable of finding such a mysterious and beautiful place, but they are condemned to surrender and curtail anything related to it.

Being more advanced than its predecessor tale, *Wildwood Dancing* provides its five sisters with more advantageous situations and conditions. For a start, their father welcomes any desire for knowledge from his daughters by funding Paula's and Jena's teachings by a local village priest, allowing Jena to learn the business accounts and even trusting everything upon her

shoulders. He does not wish to be the tyrannical figure controlling every little aspect of his daughters' lives and instead gives them the liberty to grow and bloom as what they truly are. What is interesting, the girls are not forced to follow the traditional women's duties to dance, sing, play instruments, or more of them. Aunt Bogdana, one of their relatives, criticizes their father's lack of attention toward the feminine etiquettes and abilities that surround women in that era. She views them below average in dealing with suitors.

"Say no more, Jena. That is not a path you can seriously contemplate. Such women are not... respectable. At your age, you cannot fully understand what I allude to. Only a certain kind of female seeks to enter the masculine realm of commerce, or indeed"—she glanced at Paula—"that of scholarship. Our strengths lie in the domestic sphere. A truly wise woman is the one who knows her place. You need suitable husbands. They won't just chance along. You must make an effort. Being a man, your father simply doesn't understand. That he has never provided dancing lessons for you illustrates that." (Marillier, 2008, p. 83)

Her comments upon the girls' indifference toward the prospect of finding the perfect suitors clearly show her attitude toward women's education. Correlating with Stuard's statement above, women who pursue education for a living are still viewed as peculiar and abnormal. Certainly, there have been few who do so, but they belong outside the circle of what is considered as honorable. Meanwhile, Jena performs her duties as the head of the household but gets strongly opposed by her cousin Cezar, Aunt Bogdana's son. He wishes to take control of their land, house and their secret journey to the Other Kingdom by acting identical-

ly to the king father of the twelve princesses. Cezar also calls out to any men who can reveal the secret of the rumored kingdom of the Wildwood Forest and vows to eradicate all of its folks once they are located, by claiming that those creatures are responsible for the death of his older brother Costi. Jena is threatened and harassed repeatedly by him, and she has no choice but to let him run around like a beast in her land. She and her sisters also have to watch helplessly as he scolds and discards their right of pursuing education as well as maintaining their own business affairs. Still, they manage to keep their secret unrevealed and trick Cezar.

“My elder sister was a dreamer, and I had a different kind of future in mind for myself: one in which I would work alongside my father, traveling and trading and seeing the world. Marriage and children were secondary in my scheme of things.” (Marillier, 2008, p. 5)

From her statement, Jena strongly declares that she will not achieve less than having her rights as a whole human being unbound. As a currently unmarried young woman, she asserts to take full control of her own life and prefers to tie the knot after having the chance to explore the world with her father. Although Tati is much more feminine in her thoughts and principles, this does not automatically change Jena’s aspirations to become an accomplished woman. On the contrary, upon witnessing her eldest sister losing almost everything for love, Jena turns to be more skeptical and rigid toward any kind of romantic reconciling, which leads her distrusting and rejecting the newly transformed Costi, who all this time has been under

the witch’s curse of being a toad. Unlike the Youngest/Twelfth Princess from the Grimm’s tale, Jena does not quite to be the sensible one in her family. She places them above anything and thus resolves to warn them and decide on many over-tangled things at their behest. There are many who try to crush her opinions and bravery from the start, especially her own older sister Tati and cousin Cezar, but she rebels against them and ends up as an admirable heroine.

In other words, up to this point, Marillier has successfully extended the function of an original narrative by re-shaping its characters, traits, positions, values, and social circumstances that liberate the confinements of women, particularly in their representation in a fairy tale. By creating a longer version with new modifications, *Wildwood Dancing* not only offers an old tale fashioned as a fresh one, but it also allows the audience to see fairy tales in different perspectives. Here, Marillier turns an oppressed figure from the Grimm’s tale, which is the Youngest/Twelfth Princess, into a strong leading heroine by making her empowered with sensibility trait and a family who supports her choices.

Conclusion

Sensibility does not only function as a strong instinct or intuition in deciding right from wrong, but it also proves to be a crucial asset for women to protect themselves and succeed against a patriarchal world. Without being sensible, a woman will receive much less worth in society, for she will only be considered as an illogical and emotionally weak figure. Indeed, it is important to have a fairy

tale to be rewritten or reinterpreted, for it will give far deeper insight and complete understanding toward the missing gaps contained in the original version belonging to a certain socio-cultural setting.

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